

# Travel Suggestions for Individuals with Vision Impairment



If you are experiencing difficulties traveling safely and independently, the following hints may be useful to you. There are many useful tools to enhance independent travel skills in the home and community, including a white cane, guide dog, or sighted guide. If these tools are insufficient for your needs, or if you continue to feel unsafe, the services of an Orientation and Mobility Specialist are recommended. These services are available at Community Services for the Blind and Partially Sighted. Please call us for more information, (800) 458-4888.

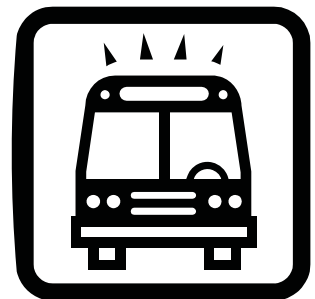
## Traffic Signals

- If you have difficulty locating or seeing traffic signals, listen to the flow of parallel traffic on the street you are walking along.
- Do not be misled by buses, which sometimes pull out after stopping for passengers and not just when the light changes. **It is better to avoid crossing at crosswalks where there is no traffic control. It is far safer to walk the extra distance to a crosswalk with a traffic light or stop sign.**



## Bus Travel

- If you have trouble identifying buses, try asking the driver. For example, "Does this bus go to



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Broadway & Madison?" This avoids confusion about why you didn't "see" the bus number.

- As you board the bus, ask the driver to inform you when the bus comes to your destination.
- If you are traveling a regular route, acquaint yourself with obvious landmarks several blocks ahead of your stop so you can independently identify your stop.
- Always wait for the bus to come to a full stop before standing up and walking to the exit door.
- You may also want to consider acquiring a Bus ID Kit, which indicates to the bus driver in large bold numbers which bus you are waiting for. To request a kit at no charge, call Metro Transit at (206) 553-3060 and speak with a Customer Service Representative.

## **Asking for Help**

- You may need to ask for help when seeking visual information that is obvious to fully sighted people, such as a street name or landmark. Simply explain to people that you do not see well or that you have a vision problem, as this tends to result in more understanding responses. It also demonstrates your realistic command of the situation.

## **Color and Contrast**

- Take special note of colors and contrasts to help you.
- Sidewalks appear light against the green grass.
- Often an approaching street will be darker than the sidewalk because it is asphalt (blacktop).
- Curbs are often dark lines due to shadows, or they may be painted red and yellow to designate a bus zone.

## Scanning Techniques

- For some people it is helpful to alternate between looking ahead in the distance and looking down immediately ahead. This scanning technique allows you to use important clues and anticipate dangers in the distance and still maintain position, accuracy of step, and safety of movement.
- When you want to locate objects in the distance, try using a logical scanning technique. For example, when looking for a traffic signal, try following the crosswalk lines to the opposite curb; then follow the curb back and forth to find the poles up on the sidewalk. Follow these poles upward to see which one has the light. This scanning technique can be practiced first without an aid and later on with a prescribed distance aid like a telescope or binoculars.

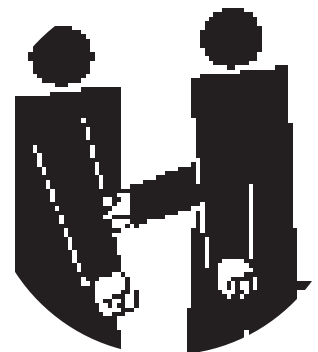
## The White Cane



There are two types of canes available for purchase. The adjustable white support cane is useful for ID, but is also used for support and balance. It can be purchased without training. However, if you would like assistance training is available. The long white canes are either collapsible or rigid and are available in different heights. Training must be provided for first time users. White canes can be purchased at our adaptive aids store, SightConnection.

## Sighted Guide

If at times you feel more comfortable being guided by someone, hold your guide's arm just above the elbow so you are a step behind and to the side. This sighted guide technique allows you to take an active role in traveling while being guided. It also gives you opportunity to interpret and use guide-initiated cues and information you might otherwise miss from the environment.





Visit our adaptive aids store,  
**SightConnection** online 24/7.

We have over 400 products for living with vision loss —  
we are your local source for vision needs.

[www.SightConnection.com](http://www.SightConnection.com) or call (800) 458-4888, 9 AM - 5 PM, M-F

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**C•S•B•P•S**

Programs and Services

- Low vision clinic and low vision rehabilitation
- Instruction in independent living skills
- Professional counseling and support groups
- Safe travel and orientation training
- Education, information and referral services
- Assistive Technology resources
- Adaptive aids specialty store, SightConnection

Since 1965, our mission has been to work with individuals, families and communities to restore, maintain and enhance the independence and well-being of people with impaired vision.

**Community Services for the Blind and Partially Sighted**

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Agency hours: 8 AM – 5 PM, M-F

SightConnection Store hours: 9 AM - 5 PM, M-F

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